

In the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) A method for using process exceptions to provide a notification for a distributed process, comprising:
 - identifying a process;
 - determining a location of a critical point in the identified process;
 - determining an information source at the critical point in the identified process;
 - monitoring stimulus from the information source;
 - processing said stimulus to detect at least one process exception to the identified process;
 - communicating the process exception to a messaging controller over a communication mechanism;
 - processing the process exception at the messaging controller to automatically determine a recipient to receive a notification of the process exception and any associated recipient-specific contextual information;
 - communicating the notification of the process exception and the associated recipient-specific contextual information to the recipient; and
 - when if the communication of the process exception to the messaging controller is not acknowledged, communicating the process exception to the messaging controller over an alternative communication mechanism;
 - wherein monitoring stimulus from the information source and communicating the process exception over the alternative communication mechanism are accomplished independent of local communication and information systems infrastructures of the identified process.
2. (Cancelled)

3. (Previously presented) The method for using process exceptions to provide a notification for a distributed process of claim 1, wherein identifying a process comprises identifying a supply chain process.
4. (Currently amended) The method for using process exceptions to provide a notification for a distributed process of claim 1, further comprising providing a local warning of the process exception at the location of the critical point in the identified process.
5. (Previously presented) The method for using process exceptions to provide a notification for a distributed process of claim 1, further comprising selecting the communication mechanism and alternate communication mechanism from the group consisting of a local area network, Internet, modem, mobile phone, satellite, and pager.
6. (Currently amended) The method for using process exceptions to provide a notification for a distributed process of claim 1, wherein communicating the notification of the process exception and the associated recipient-specific contextual information to the recipient further comprises an escalation process when if the notification of the process exception is not acknowledged, wherein the escalation process is selected from the group consisting of communicating the notification of the process exception and the associated recipient-specific contextual information to the recipient over another communication means and communicating the notification of the process exception and the associated recipient-specific contextual information to an alternate recipient.
7. (Currently amended) A system for using process exceptions to provide a notification for a distributed process, comprising:
 - means for monitoring stimulus from an information source at a critical point in an identified process;

means for processing said stimulus to detect at least one process exception
to the identified process;

a messaging controller;

means for communicating the process exception to the messaging
controller over a communication mechanism;

means for processing the process exception at the messaging controller to
automatically determine a recipient to receive a notification of the process
exception and ~~any~~ associated recipient-specific contextual information; and

means for communicating the notification of the process exception and the
associated recipient-specific contextual information to the recipient;

wherein when if the communication of the process exception to the
messaging controller is not acknowledged, the means for communicating the
process exception to the messaging controller comprises an alternative
communication mechanism; and

wherein the means for monitoring stimulus from the information source;
~~the communication mechanism;~~ and the alternate communication mechanism are
independent of local communication and information systems infrastructures of
the identified process.

8. (Previously presented) The system for using process exceptions to provide a notification for a distributed process of claim 7, wherein the process is a supply chain process.
9. (Currently amended) The system for using process exceptions to provide a notification for a distributed process of claim 7, further comprising means for providing a local warning of the process exception at the location of the critical point in the identified process.
10. (Previously presented) The system for using process exceptions to provide a notification for a distributed process of claim 7, wherein the communication

mechanism and alternate communication mechanism are selected from the group consisting of a local area network, Internet, modem, mobile phone, satellite, and pager.

11. (Currently amended) The system for using process exceptions to provide a notification for a distributed process of claim 7, wherein the means for communicating the notification of the process exception and the associated recipient-specific contextual information to the recipient further comprises a means for escalation when if the notification of the process exception is not acknowledged, wherein the means for escalation is selected from the group consisting of means for communicating the notification of the process exception and the associated recipient-specific contextual information to the recipient over another communication means and means for communicating the notification of the process exception and the associated recipient-specific contextual information to an alternate recipient.
12. (Currently amended) The method for using process exceptions to provide a notification for a distributed process of claim 1, wherein the identified process is a supply chain process and the information source is selected from the group consisting of production equipment, environmental sensors, metrology equipment, quality equipment, applications, databases, and news feeds.
13. (Currently amended) The method for using process exceptions to provide a notification for a distributed process of claim 1, wherein the identified process is a supply chain process selected from the group consisting of a manufacturing process, a marketing process, an accounting process, a tax process, a personnel process, a design process, an engineering process, a regulatory process, a quality process, and an environmental variable that impacts quality of a process.

14. (Currently amended) The system for using process exceptions to provide a notification for a distributed process of claim 7, wherein the identified process is a supply chain process and the information source comprises a source selected from the group consisting of production equipment, environmental sensors, metrology equipment, quality equipment, applications, databases, and news feeds.
15. (Currently amended) The system for using process exceptions to provide a notification for a distributed process of claim 7, wherein the identified process is a supply chain process selected from the group consisting of a manufacturing process, a marketing process, an accounting process, a tax process, a personnel process, a design process, an engineering process, a regulatory process, a quality process, and an environmental variable that impacts quality of a process.